Welcome and Introduction

AUSTEN PARRISH | INDIANA UNIVERSITY MAURER SCHOOL OF LAW
CHAIR, AALS MEMBERSHIP REVIEW COMMITTEE
Quick Overview

Advancing Excellence in Legal Education

Programs for Faculty

The Membership Review Process

- ABA Accreditation v. AALS Membership Review
- Regulatory Review v. Peer Review
- List of Requirements v. Adherence to Core Values.
AALS Core Values

Scholarship and Teaching
Diversity and Nondiscrimination
Self-Governance
Academic Freedom
Honesty and Integrity

AALS Bylaw Article 6. Requirements of Membership

a. The obligations of membership imposed by this Article and the Executive Committee Regulations are intended to reflect the Association’s core values and distinctive role as a membership association, while according appropriate respect for the autonomy of its member schools.

b. The Association values and expects its member schools to value:
   (i) a faculty composed primarily of full-time teacher-scholars who constitute a self-governing intellectual community engaged in the creation and dissemination of knowledge about law, legal processes, and legal systems, and who are devoted to fostering justice and public service;
   (ii) academic freedom;
   (iii) diversity of viewpoints;
   (iv) excellent scholarship;
   (v) excellent teaching;
   (vi) a rigorous academic program in the context of a dynamic curriculum that is both broad and deep;
   (vii) a diverse faculty hired, promoted, and retained based on meeting and supporting high standards of teaching and scholarship and in accordance with principles of nondiscrimination;
   (viii) competent and professional staff to support the mission of the law school;
   (ix) selection of students based upon intellectual ability and personal potential for success in the study and practice of law, through a fair and nondiscriminatory process designed to produce a diverse student body and a broadly representative legal profession; and
   (x) honesty, integrity, and professionalism in dealing with students, faculty, staff, the public, and the Association.
AALS Review’s Prior Focus

Regulatory In Nature

Detailed review and search for areas of non-compliance

Many schools requested to report back
A Renewed Focus

An Emphasis on Peer Review and Mutual Support

Presumption that member schools desire to adhere to core values

Peer Review, including:

• Peer Counsel when member school appears to be struggling.
• Fewer report backs—only if member school is not willing or able to take appropriate steps to correct serious shortcomings involving core values.
• Praise for innovation

Recognition that schools can be different while pursuing core values

Process remains confidential
Overview of the AALS Process

JUDITH AREEN | AALS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Membership Review Process

- Member Schools – reviewed every ten years
  • Bylaw 6 standards; Regulations and Policy

- Change of Operation
  • Significant – major programmatic, locational or institutional change (such as merger, new entity, new degree, new division, new branch, affiliation, closure)
AALS Membership Review Process

- **School Visit**
  - AALS Questionnaire
  - ABA Materials

- **AALS Report**
  - Sent to member school
  - Any response by member school

- **Membership Review Committee**
  - Reads AALS Report, AALS Questionnaire, ABA materials, school responses
  - Recommendation to Executive Committee

- **Executive Committee Decides**
  - Letter to the School
Membership Review Committee

- **Who?**
  - Law school faculty
  - Law school deans

- **What?**
  - Relies primarily on AALS reporter to be fact finder

- **When?**
  - Meets in April and October
Executive Committee

Who?
• Law school faculty and deans
• Elected by member schools

What?
• Determines compliance with AALS Bylaws and
  • Executive Committee Regulations
• Interprets and Implements AALS requirements

When?
• May and November
Executive Committee Letter to Member School

- **Peer Advice**
  - Strengths and achievements; suggestions for improvement

- **More Information**
  - Cannot determine compliance with membership requirements

- **Progress Report**
  - Concern about compliance with requirements

- **Sanction**
  - Material failure to comply with membership requirements
Support for the AALS Reporter

BARBARA STUDENMUND | AALS DIRECTOR OF MEMBERSHIP REVIEW
Workshop Handout Contents

- AALS Process and Role of the AALS Reporter
- Sabbatical Visit Timeline
- Reporter Appointment Letter
  - Enclosed: Instructions to the AALS Reporter
- Classroom Visit Form
- Discussion with Dean
- AALS Questionnaire
- Format of the Report
- EC Letter to School
- AALS Bylaw and EC Regulations
AALS Reporter Materials

- Dropbox invitation sent via email

- Included materials:
  - AALS Membership Requirements
  - Memo to Dean
  - AALS Questionnaire
  - Report Format Outline
  - Reporter Instruction Memo
  - ABA Conduct Memo
  - ABA Site Report Template
  - Classroom Visit Form
  - Confidentiality
Changes to the AALS Membership Review Process

- **AALS Questionnaire**
  - Draws information from the ABA Site Evaluation Questionnaire
  - Also Collects Info re Online Distance Education Information

- **Communications with AALS Reporters**
  - “Know Before You Go” emails
  - Reporter Survey

- **Annual Report sent to Member Schools and Reporters**
What have I gotten myself into?
The AALS Reporter 101

- Represents the AALS
- Independent of ABA/different focus
  - Faculty Governance
  - Faculty Scholarship
  - Faculty and Student Diversity
  - Nondiscrimination
- Fact-finder
- You’re it
Preparing for the visit

The Visit

Writing the Report
Preparing for the Visit

- Coordinate with key people
  - Team chair
  - Team members (class/office visits)
  - The dean*
  - On-site point persons
  - Faculty chairs, staff
Preparing for the Visit

- Review key documents
  - AALS Site Questionnaire & Prior Report
  - ABA documents: Self Assessment (Self Study, Questionnaire) & Prior Report
  - The School’s website
Preparing for the Visit

- Review suggested format of the AALS Report
- Follow suggested AALS Format for the Report
- When surveyed, Reporters are split on whether to write a draft before the visit (and confirm data during visit) or wait until after the visit. Either way, the focus is to be thorough and accurate.
Preparing for the Visit

- Meet alone with Dean
  - By phone before the visit
  - In person early in the visit
- Communicate the AALS role
- What is the School doing right?
The Visit

- First meeting with the team

- At the school
  - The dean and president (in and out)
  - Meet with key people
  - Class and office visits (team effort)
  - Due Diligence (trust but verify)

- Fill in the blanks
Writing the Report

- Make sure *all* the needed information is included
- Provide an accurate and current faculty count
- Ask chair for team members’ drafts
- Incorporate ABA Report by reference
- Conform final ABA draft to your draft
- Be factual; avoid using adjectives
- No judgments or conclusions
- No names
- Polish/edit
Submit Your Report to the AALS Office

- Expect to hear from me with any questions or suggested changes
- Please respond to my email as soon as possible with your comments
- Finalize the report
It’s done!
The AALS Questionnaire and Finalizing the AALS Report

CARA MCQUITTY | AALS MEMBERSHIP REVIEW COORDINATOR
The AALS Questionnaire

- Faculty and Scholarship
  - 20% of J.D. students in part-time program
  - Supplement chart

- Teaching
  - New emphasis on positive changes

- Improvements Since the Last Site Visit
  - New focus on positive changes

- Nondiscrimination and Diversity
  - AALS Bylaw 6-3.a updated in January 2016
  - New section on claims of discrimination

- Faculty Profile

This questionnaire seeks information relevant to the core values of the AALS that will assist the AALS, its Membership Review Committee, and Executive Committee in the membership review process. The AALS membership review process is meant to be complaint and not diagnostic, the AALS’s accreditation process. Our questionnaire, therefore, focuses on the core values of AALS. This questionnaire is formatted as a word document to make it accessible to reviewers in response to our questions. If you have any questions, please contact Barbara Stademann, AALS Director of Membership Review, at bstademann@aals.org or (202) 588-5841.
AALS Questionnaire for 2018-2019

- Information from the ABA Site Evaluation Questionnaire

- Supplemental information:
  - Teaching quality and effectiveness
  - Scholarly productivity

- Replacement information:
  - Faculty diversity efforts
  - Online and distance education

- Information we continue to ask for:
  - If more than 20% of J.D. students are in the part-time division, we ask for a “Course Hours Summary” chart
  - 509 Standard Information Reports
Wrap Up: AALS Staff Review

- AALS Staff and the Membership Review Consultant reviews AALS report for:
  - Completeness
  - Consistent data
  - Facts

- Ensures that report:
  - Does not indicate AALS compliance
  - Does not inappropriately identify faculty
Wrap Up: Committee Review

- AALS Membership Review and Executive Committees review materials for each school:
  - AALS Report
  - AALS Questionnaire
  - ABA Report
  - Dean’s comments on ABA and AALS Reports

- Membership Review Committee makes recommendations to the Executive Committee
  - Executive Committee sends final action letter to the school
  - AALS Reporter will receive a copy of the final action letter
Overview of the ABA Process

WILLIAM ADAMS | ABA SECTION OF LEGAL EDUCATION DEPUTY MANAGING DIRECTOR
Planning for the Visit at the School

- Sabbatical Review of Fully Approved School Every Ten Years
- Self Study--Changes
  - Site Evaluation Questionnaire (SEQ)
    - No more data entry
  - Self-Assessment
    - Respond to Standard 204 (b)
The Site Visit Process

Appointment of Site Team Chair

Appointment of Other Site Team Members
- Librarian
- Clinician
- Judge/Practitioner
- Academic
- Univ. Admin.
- AALS Representative

-Chair coordinates Team Member Assignments
Organization of Visit
Site Visit

- Team Meetings
- Entrance Meeting
- Interviews with Faculty, Administrators, Staff
- Class Visits
- Meeting(s) with Students
- Exit Interview

Materials
- Preparation for the Visit

SEQ
- Self Assessment
- 3 AQs

Site Report Template
Evaluation of Site Team

- by Dean
- by Chair
- by Team Members
- by Report Reviewer
- by Council Monitor

Consideration of Site Report by Council/Decision Letter

- RFI
- 11(a)(2)
- 11(a)(3)
Report Back by School on Any RFI’s, 12(b)’s

“School Remains on List of Approved Law Schools”